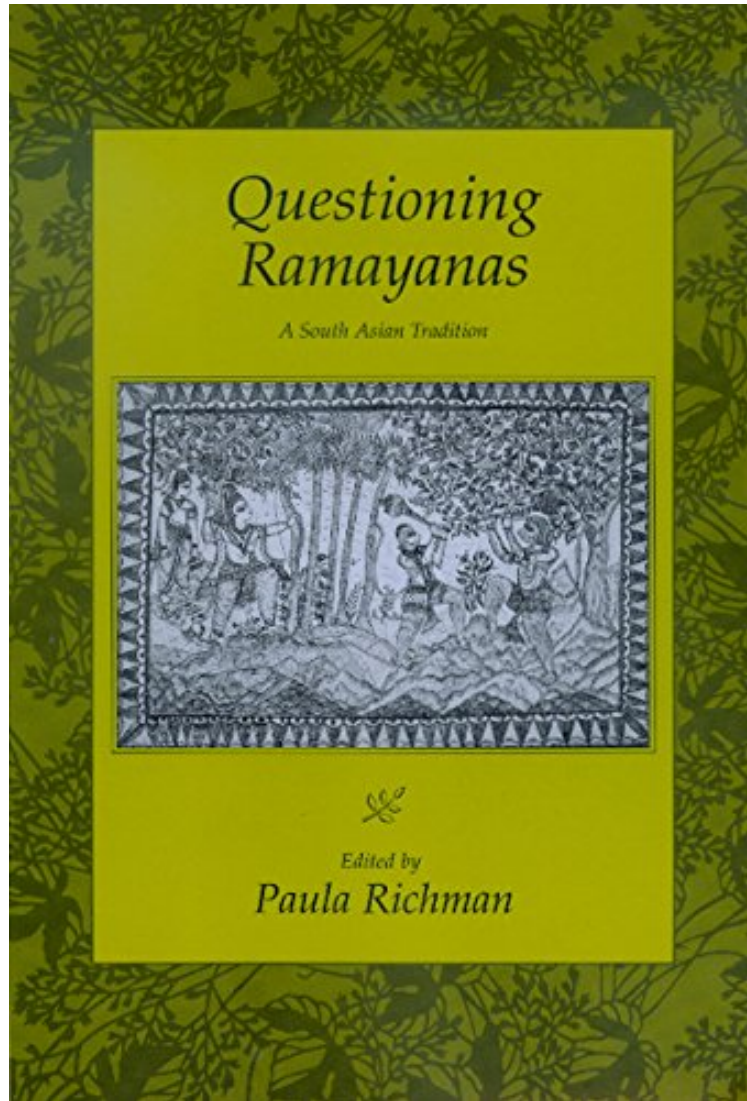


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Questioning Rama's story has played a generative role in sustaining the Ramayana tradition over centuries, across regions, and among different communities. Although the story of Rama (Ramkatha) has generated many tellings, most people are familiar with a few authoritative texts, such as those by Valmiki, Tulsidas, or the television serial by Ramanand Sagar. This volume expands our understanding of Ramkatha by focusing on tellings that question aspects of such dominant texts. Through analysis of oral and written narratives, exegesis, plays, songs, rituals, and poetry, the contributors demonstrate the centrality of questioning within the Ramayana tradition and chart the many forms such interrogation takes. The book demonstrates how questioning safeguards the diversity and capaciousness of the Ramayana tradition.

About the Author Paula Richman is Irvin E. Houck Professor in the Humanities, Department of Religion, at Oberlin College. She is the editor of *Extraordinary Child: Poems from a South Indian Devotional Genre* (1997) and *Many Ramayanas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia* (California, 1991).